

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 782
By Overbey

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of James "Jim" Clemens
Renfro of Blount County.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of James "Jim" Clemens Renfro of Blount County; and

WHEREAS, Jim Renfro was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, he served with acumen and alacrity as a longtime educator and coach, in which positions he earned the respect of his colleagues and students alike for the exemplary quality of his work; and

WHEREAS, a native of Blount County, Jim Renfro was born January 31, 1915, near Maryville; he was the fourth child of Spence Clemens Renfro and Lillian Everett Renfro; and

WHEREAS, Jim Renfro grew up on Old Walland Highway near the three-room Union School where he began his education and played baseball and basketball; he attended Everett High School and graduated from Maryville College in 1938, where he was a star athlete and captain of the football team; he earned a master's degree at the University of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, he also met his future wife, Evelyn Ferguson, while in college; they settled in Blount County, where they raised their children and lived their entire lives; and

WHEREAS, Jim Renfro was a lifelong educator, generously sharing his skills, his compassion, and genuine interest with thousand of students over the years; he began his career in 1938 as a principal at Louisville Elementary School; in 1942-43, he taught and coached at Porter High School, and then taught and coached at Maryville High School from 1943-1956; and

WHEREAS, after leaving Maryville High School, Jim Renfro served as the first principal at Maryville Junior High School from 1956 to 1970, where he was instrumental in making it into

one of the finest schools of its type in the nation; he finished his career as principal of Fort Craig Elementary School, taking a well deserved retirement in 1980; and

WHEREAS, his legacy as a school administrator notwithstanding, Jim Renfro may be best remembered as a sports coach and player; he is enshrined on the Maryville College Sports Wall of Fame as a football player and wrestler, and was a member of the inaugural class of the Blount County Sports Hall of Fame; and

WHEREAS, he coached football at Maryville High School in the era many credit as the beginning of the school's "football dynasty," including the 1946-1947 school year when his football and baseball teams went undefeated. The field at Maryville High School is named in his honor, and a scholarship has been established in his honor for a Maryville High School senior who chooses to declare as their major the field of education; and

WHEREAS, in addition, Jim Renfro set a highly visible standard of citizenship for his students and area residents. He served three terms on the Maryville Board of Education, and was a member of the Maryville Planning Commission and the Maryville-Alcoa Jaycees; in 1966 he served as the Blount County Campaign Manager for Democratic Governor Buford Ellington's election, and in 2004 was named to the Daily Times Hall of Fame, honoring graduates of schools in Blount County; and

WHEREAS, he was a devout member of Broadway Methodist Church, where he worshipped faithfully for many years; and

WHEREAS, Jim Renfro was also deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, he enjoyed the loving companionship of his devoted wife, Evelyn Ferguson Renfro, was also an educator, teaching physical education for many years in the Maryville school system; and

WHEREAS, by his passing, Jim Renfro is reunited with his parents, Spence Clemens Renfro and Lillian Everett Renfro, four brothers, William E., Raymond E., Max L., and Spence Clyde Renfro;

WHEREAS, survivors include his wife, Evelyn; two sisters, Mary Lee Cunningham and Jean Scofield; son, Jim Renfro, Jr. and wife Jolene; two daughters, Lee Ann Renfro Simon and husband Donald, and Sarah Renfro Lohr and husband Kent; six grandchildren, Rebecca Renfro

Grimes and husband Eric, Jim Renfro III and wife Shelly, John Renfro, Laura Simon, and Meagan and Jon Lohr; three great-grandchildren, Tristan Grimes, Collin James Renfro, and Allison Renfro; and nieces, nephews and cousins; and

WHEREAS, Jim Renfro leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, he had a positive impact on the lives of many students, both on and off the playing field, for whom he was a role model and inspiration; he may well have touched and positively influenced more lives than anyone in the history of Blount County;

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being, who leaves behind a legacy of such impressive stature; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of James C. "Jim" Renfro, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family and friends of James C. "Jim" Renfro.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.